The SL Arts and Life Magazine

reZ

november 2013

ROCK YOUR RACK!

with StarGazer Daylight

Best DJs in SL

by Harry Bailey (TPG)

Be Thankful

from Gudrun Gausman

What the Hell Am I?

wonders Sedona Mills

CONTENTS

- **Cat Q** Cat Boccaccio poses her 14 questions to a prolific builder, photographer and machinima artist, Ronda Saunders.
- **DJs in SL (Part Deux)** The Perfect Gentleman corners two of SL's finest DJs, BigJack Rolls and Hy Gynoid, who spill all of their secrets about a great SL musical experience.
- **What The Hell Am I?** Sedona never shies away from the subjects of sexuality, identity and gender. Go Sed!
- **Lou Reed** Crap Mariner celebrates the life and times of the American icon, Lou Reed, as only he can.
- **Don't Worry, Be Thankful!** Our Gudrun Gausman explores an American tradition - Thanksgiving - and asks whether it's better celebrated in SL or RL.
- **The Hundred Selves** One of our regular contributors, Adrian Blair, brings us a very special poem. Just stunning.
- **Rock Your Rack** StarGazer Daylight shines her light on a great cause and what SL is doing to contribute to a cure.

About the Cover: Jami captures the incomparable BigJack Rolls in his natural habitat, DJing at Savoy and entertaining like only he can. Do what you need to do, but hunt him and DJ Hy Gynoid down. You'll be glad you did.

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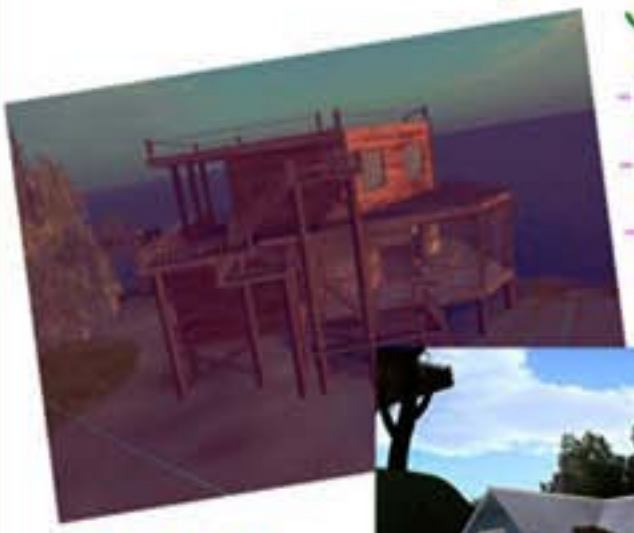

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Cat Questionnaire: Ronda Saunders

by Cat Boccaccio

This month, photographer, builder and machinima artist Ronda Saunders dares to answer Cat's 14 leading que

SL Date of Birth: March 3rd 2008
SL activity: I am a Second Life photographer, builder and, more recently, machinima maker.
RL location: Born RL Cape Town, South Africa, lived in France the UK and currently Australia
In-your-own-words bio: I've had no experience or training in any form of graphic art in RL but here inworld my life revolves around my love of SL photography, creating other forms of SL art and recently I've started experimenting with machinima.

1. What in SL has brought you the most happiness?
Definitely the friendships I have and those I've had over the five and a half years I've been here

2. What has given you the most sadness?
The loss of friends for whatever reason.

3. How would you describe your home in SL?
My first home was a freebie beach house on a tiny corner of a friends parcel, now I have a house I built myself on my own sim where I've created a beautiful tropical island paradise, it's where I live and have my atelier, my gallery and installations all in the sky above.
When I say it's where I live, I mean that in a very real sense. Everyday when I arrive inworld the first thing I do is to take my dog for a walk across the island to check on the horses feed and water and I often sit alone on my patio in the evenings and watch the sun set across the lagoon .

4. Who in SL do you admire most?
There's not really one single person but I do admire creative people, all those amazing builders and artists whos works I come across everyday here in SL. Being in total awe of anyone who can make mesh, I guess if I had to pick one person it would be claudia222 Jewell.

stions.

5. What character trait do you have in SL that is furthest from your RL personality?

Oh dear lol... OK, I hate to admit it, but I can be a really vindictive bitch when I'm crossed. My RL alter ego is far more tolerant and forgiving than I could ever be.

6. Which character trait did you leave behind in RL?

I don't think I could isolate any one specific character trait, but in many subtle ways I'm a very different person here in SL to my RL alter ego.

7. What is your weakness when it comes to spending your Linden dollars?

Lol... being a totally self-obsessed and deeply superficial person, what else but clothes, clothes, clothes and more clothes.

8. What is your favorite place in Second Life, and why?

I regularly visit the Drolma Lhakhang Tibetan Temple, the Green Tara

temple... it's my refuge, a peaceful, spiritual place where I can sit and meditate when I need to clear my head.

9. What scares you the most in (or about) Second Life?
I don't think there's anything about SL that actually scares me

10. What is your secret pleasure in SL?
Sorry to disappoint but I don't have any "secret " pleasures

11. What would it take to drive you out of Second Life?
Well like so many of us I've survived more than my share of dramas and broken hearts, so it would take a major RL crisis to drive me away from SL now.

12. What one word would you use to describe the art community in SL?
Hmmm... ok that's a tricky one, I'd have to say, "diverse" . . there really doesn't seem to be one cohesive art community in SL . . I think it's more a collection of enclaves rather than a single community

13. What are you most proud of in SL?
I've never totally understood the concept of pride... but I guess I'm proud of the home I've created for myself here.

14. If you built a sim from scratch with unlimited resources, what would it be called?
I built my own sim from scratch, unfortunately not with unlimited resources... and I called it "Isla Paradiso ".

Visit Isla Paradiso:
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Ronda's *Time Tunnel*:
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Cat's Beach Gallery

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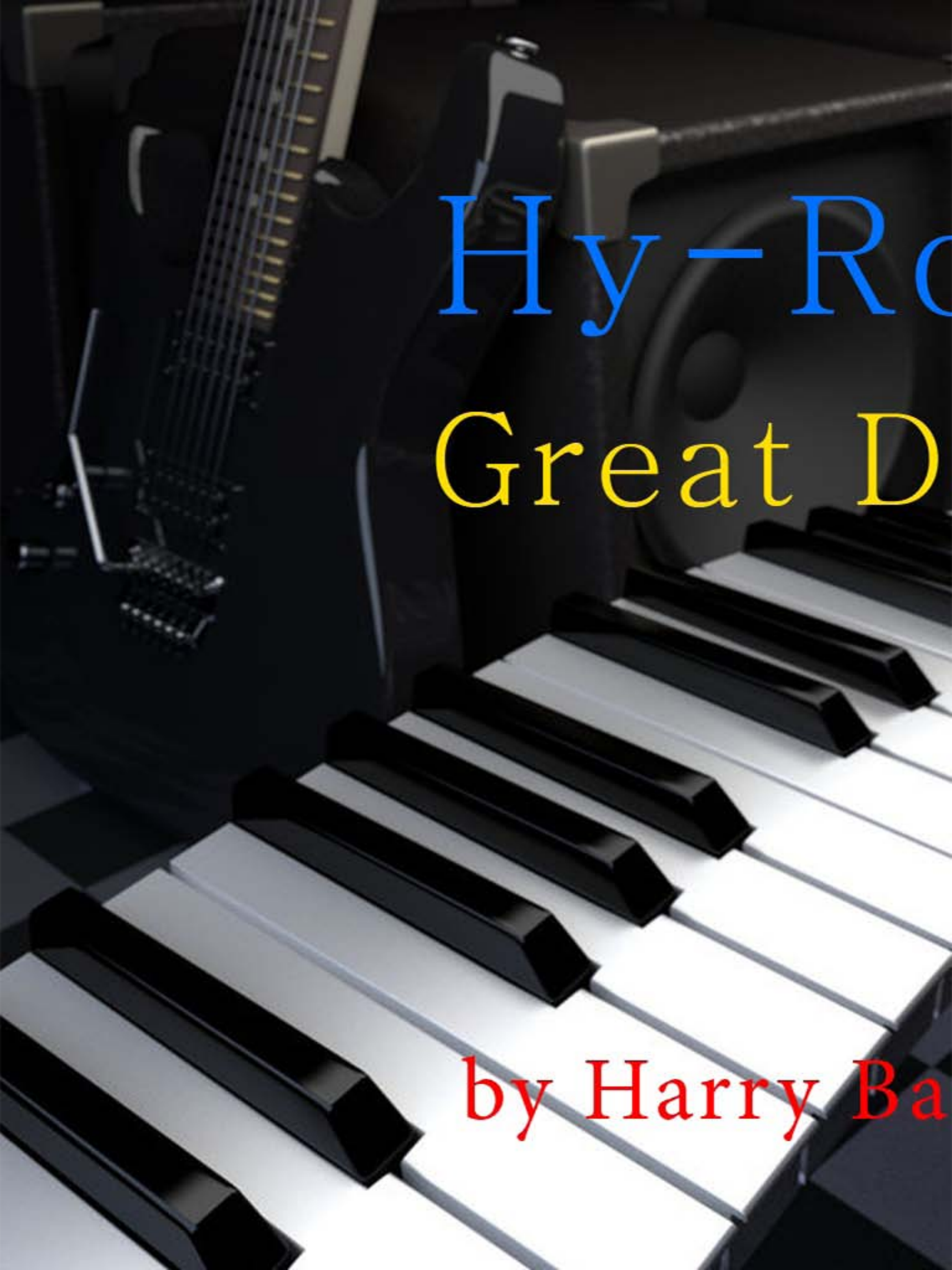

Hy-Ro

Great D

by Harry Ba

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Js in SL

iley (TPG)

(Editor: This is the second, and final, installment of The Perfect Gentleman's short series of interviews of DJs in SL. Last month, readers enjoyed the PG's visit with Graylon Ash and Blujns Benoir.)

Hy Gynoid knows his music and also his crowd. He can work a romantic ballroom like the Savoy, Hotlanta Blues Club, or even Mojo Haven and Lar's Adult clubs. Not only does he have the ability to work with great hosts, he also knows his music and has a monster collection of tunes.

HB: *Good evening Hy. Thanks for taking the time and coming over.*

HG: Glad to.

HB: *So, are you a reader of rez at all?*

HG: Yes, though it's difficult as it takes a long time to rez, no pun :P

HB: *For Fall, I wanted to do something to recognize and appreciate all the great people who work their butts off to entertain all of us for very little :) You all rock!*

HG: Thanks :) it's a lot of fun.

HB: *How many hours a week to you spend working clubs or parties?*

HG: Eight hours of showtime per week as DJ, but I'm also a co-owner of Mojo Haven, so I'm there to support other shows too. I spend about an hour prep for each DJ show, too.

HB: And I presume mostly - if not all - for tips?

HG: All for tips, yes.

HB: *I suspect that, as with most of the SL clubs, Mojo operates mostly on a break-even basis but is a lot of fun to co-own.*

HG: Yes, that's it -- anyone who owns a club with the idea of making money is nuts. We do it as a hobby -- it's the music and the company that drives us.

HB: *What is your favorite genre of music to play?*

HG: Primarily blues -- I like the raucous, upbeat stuff, though it's tough to pick favorites -- I like a wide range. I try to keep the crowd in mind. I like old acoustic blues for example, but it's not good for clubs.

HB: *How did you get into being an SL DJ?*

HG: I've been doing a regular show at the Savoy Jazz Club since it opened about five years ago. Thursday nights I work at Mojo Heaven and I do a regular Saturday night show at Howlin'

Wolf. I saw other people doing it. I used to DJ at college at the radio station years ago, so I wanted to try it.

HB: *Well, I for one am glad you took up this SL profession.*

HG: Thanks. It was some of the most fun I had at college, aside from sex and drugs ;-) I had help from a great SL DJ, Jocelyn Sands. She was the top DJ at the Dublin sim years ago when I joined. I don't think she plays much any more.

HB: *Well, as they say, sex, drugs and rock and roll, or in this case, great music. How long have you been building*

your blues collection?

HG: Wow -- since college, 40 years ago... *choke* though much more actively in the last five years since DJ'ing.

HB: *<cough> You meant um, four years ago, right? Since we are all 27 here in SL. LOL. How hard is it to engage a virtual crowd, and does it change with crowd size during an evening?*

HG: You just can't predict whether you'll get an active crowd or not, even with the same people there. I just try to engage in local chat as much as I can, show them I'm having fun and not just routinely spinning tunes, which I am, or I wouldn't be doing it. I think a good crowd size is 15 - 20. Too few and not much chat is generate - - too many and it's just chaotic.

HB: *You are one of the DJs who works some of the "A"dult clubs. How different or challenging do you find it working in a nude or semi nude crowd? I know that changes the chat somewhat from my limited experience.*

HG: It doesn't change what I do in any way.

HB: *What advice would you share with someone who wants to become an SL DJ?*

HG: Don't do it unless you love the music. Don't go into it for monetary gain. It doesn't pay well -- you'll be disappointed :) Like anything, if your heart isn't in it, you won't be good. Also, you need a LOT of music. You

have to keep the shows fresh. People remember when you play the same tunes all the time and get some decent equipment. Headset mics suck.

HB: *I would think you would need something upward of 20,000 tunes to even begin to do well on a regular basis and be able to field requests.*

HG: Yeah, that's a good start. I don't download illegally, either (i.e., from YouTube). I have over 70,000 tunes in our library and my wife, Isobela Capalini, is a great DJ -- she does shows here too. She plays at Mojo, Blarney Stone and Savoy regularly and subs at Hotlanta often. She's great at finding new music and she's been DJ'ing for over four years.

HB: *Do you have any other wisdom to add before I ask you the all-important last two questions?*

HG: I started a show a couple of months ago on City Sounds Radio. It's a web radio station listed with iTunes. Friday mornings not SL, so not as Hy, but I got that gig as a result of the SL gigs.

HB: *Great! Now to finish up, #1, what is the most requested tune you get and #2 who is the most requested artist?*

HG: Ok -- probably most requested tune would be either "My Confession" by Curtis Salgado or "Sloe Gin" by Joe Bonamassa. Most requested artist would probably be Joe Bonamassa. One note -- I will not ever play "Freebird" by Lynyrd Skynyrd ... lol

HB: *Hy, thanks so much for taking the time.*

HG: My pleasure! Take care, Harry :)

You may remember BigJack Rolls from an earlier column I did about group dancing. Back in the Spring, I featured an interview with Keajea Truss. She and Jack work together often at multiple clubs. Not only does he have to know his music but he also has to play "reverse stump the band" with Kaejae in the hope of selecting tunes that will entertain the crowd and challenge her dance inventory and talents fully. Jack has also been around SL long enough that when I invited him to be inter-

viewed, he already had a batch of notecards on his background prepared. I was amazed how closely they matched the questions I had asked all the other DJs for this article. Jack also shared quite a bit about his background in that "other" life some call real. Jack's married with two sons and four grandkids - he admits to being 71 years young. He comes from a small town in Pennsylvania and also served almost 25 years in the US Army (thanks from all of us for your service, Jack!) and 16 years in the banking credit industry. He helped start a doowop-themed station which has been going strong for over

13 years --- the Doowop Cafe Internet Radio Station at http://www.doowop-cafe.net.

HB: *Jack, just how much music do you have to work from?*

BR: 78,000 songs ... about 15 percent duplicates (some are filed in multiple categories). I love almost any music prior to 1970, especially the 50s and 60s, the first rock 'n' roll and doowop.

HB: *What do you think makes you so popular in SL and on the DooWop Cafe?*

BR: Hopefully, the effort I make to know my audience and interact with them.

HB: *I know the Doowop Cafe sim was not as successful as you had hoped. Why do you think some clubs make it and others quickly fade away in SL?*

BR: I joined SL to start the club - - to compliment the existing Internet station. I quickly found out how hard it would be to keep up. Most clubs don't make it for a couple reasons: 1) the builder / owner just lets it sit there and doesn't actively participate in running it; 2) there are a LOT of similar places - a club needs to find its own niche … and fill it well.

HB: *How did you get started as a DJ on the internet and in SL?*

BR: I ran across a fledgling Internet Radio Station back in the days of dialup 33 K modem connections ... FAKE Radio … and talked them into letting me try out this newfangled "INTERNET RADIO" thing. It was using a Real Audio server/system. Eventually, I worked at three other stations, just playing around. Then, I helped start up the Doowop Cafe station at www.doowop-cafe.net. It's still going strong after about 14 years! When I found out about Second Life, I learned that I could DJ here. And the rest is history.

HB: *How many hours a week do you spend entertaining all of us?*

BR: At this time, I'm doing four two-hour shows a week, each from 7 to 9 PM (at four different clubs). This has worked as a good balance between RL family stuff and my SL time, and, it gives me a few free nights a week in case I get asked to do a private party or one-time show (about once a month or so).

HB: *Jack, what do you enjoy about DJing across SL?*

BR: I enjoy entertaining, rather than just playing songs. This can take the form of wearing unusual avatars, reciting poetry, telling jokes, playing songs based on comments he notices in SL chat, and even giving an occasional, impromptu "how to cybersex" lesson

(PG rated, of course).

HB: *What advice have you got for aspiring noob DJs?*

BR: Anyone can fire up a playlist and let the songs play … that's a radio station. DJing, however, is much more than that. It's being aware of your audiences. Greet them as they come in, know their song preferences, respond to comments in chat by playing songs that fit what is being said, fill requests and dedications, introduce the songs, give some info occasionally about a tune or singer, etc. In other words, a DJ is NOT a person who plays music. A DJ is an entertainer.

HB: *What is your favorite genre, song and most requested song or artist?*

BR: Genre - '50s and '60s rock 'n' roll/oldies tunes (by the way, most peoples favorite genre is the type of music they listened to in their teenage high school years). Artist and song? I don't have any specific "#1 favorite" ... but I have about 500 that are in second place. Most requested - hmmm - probably Unchained Melody ... that's a big favorite for couples. What is interesting though is what is NOT requested. I seldom get a request for a song by Michael Jackson, Elvis Presley, Ricky Nelson, Ray Charles or some of the other "big names" of the day. It's interesting to me that people want to hear a huge variety of music, but seldom ask for performers who were the "big names."

HB: *On your nights off, which clubs do*

you frequent and which DJs do you enjoy listening to?

BR: Since I DJ four nights a week, my three nites off are usually spent with family in RL. It's a balancing act :) As for DJs - - Nay at the Blue Note, Sunflower at Runaround Sues, Shayla at Runaround Sues, all are good DJs who play the kind of music I enjoy.

HB: *Oh, one last question is about your RL background in PA. I know that back in those old days it was common to have sock hops with big name DJs and bands. Did you enjoy those growing up and, if so, what fun acts did you get to experience?*

BR: Since I lived in a small town, we didn't have any live performers. It was all jukebox tunes and the radio. My best memories, though, were summers spent at a local summer resort. I lived at the resort all summer and worked there, opening and closing the dance hall, selling cotton candy, etc., swimming in the lake and hanging out with the kids of the summer weekly renters. Think "DIrty Dancing" every summer ! :)

HB: *Jack, thanks for sharing your SL DJ knowledge with me and the rez readers! Between the interview and all those notecards, this has been a very enjoyable interview.*

BR: That's it? That was easy! LOL And put in that KJ is the bestest ever!!! I'll always remember the day that I talked to her at Sue's the first time :) If you can squeeze it in, one thing I really get out of SL DJing is the friendship of my wonderful group of "regulars." I love 'em all!

Hopefully, this "short" two-part column will give you all an insight into how hard the DJs across SL work to keep us all entertained! I know that they enjoy what they do or they would not be working so hard for so very long to make our experience that much better. The next time you run into one of these great folks, remember to consider joining their groups, tipping them appropriately and, most importantly, thanking them at the end of their set for the great time! I know this Perfect Gentlemen would be at a loss in SL with no DJs around and no one to banter with as he dances the night away!

These, of course, are only four of the amazing SL DJs and live performers who keep us enjoying great music across the world. Now, go out and set up a tour of their events and make November "Appreciate the SL DJ Month!"

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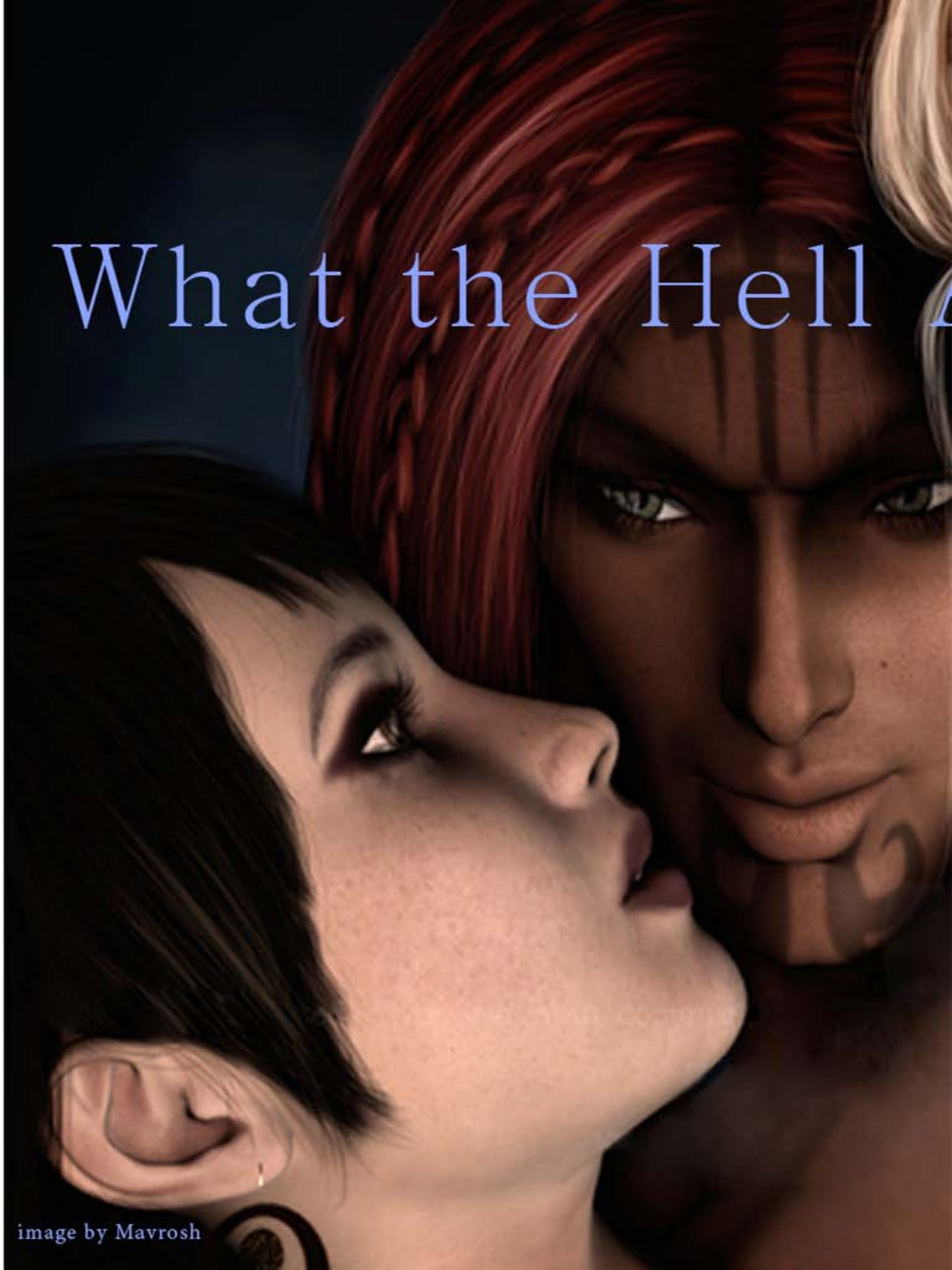
photography

jami mills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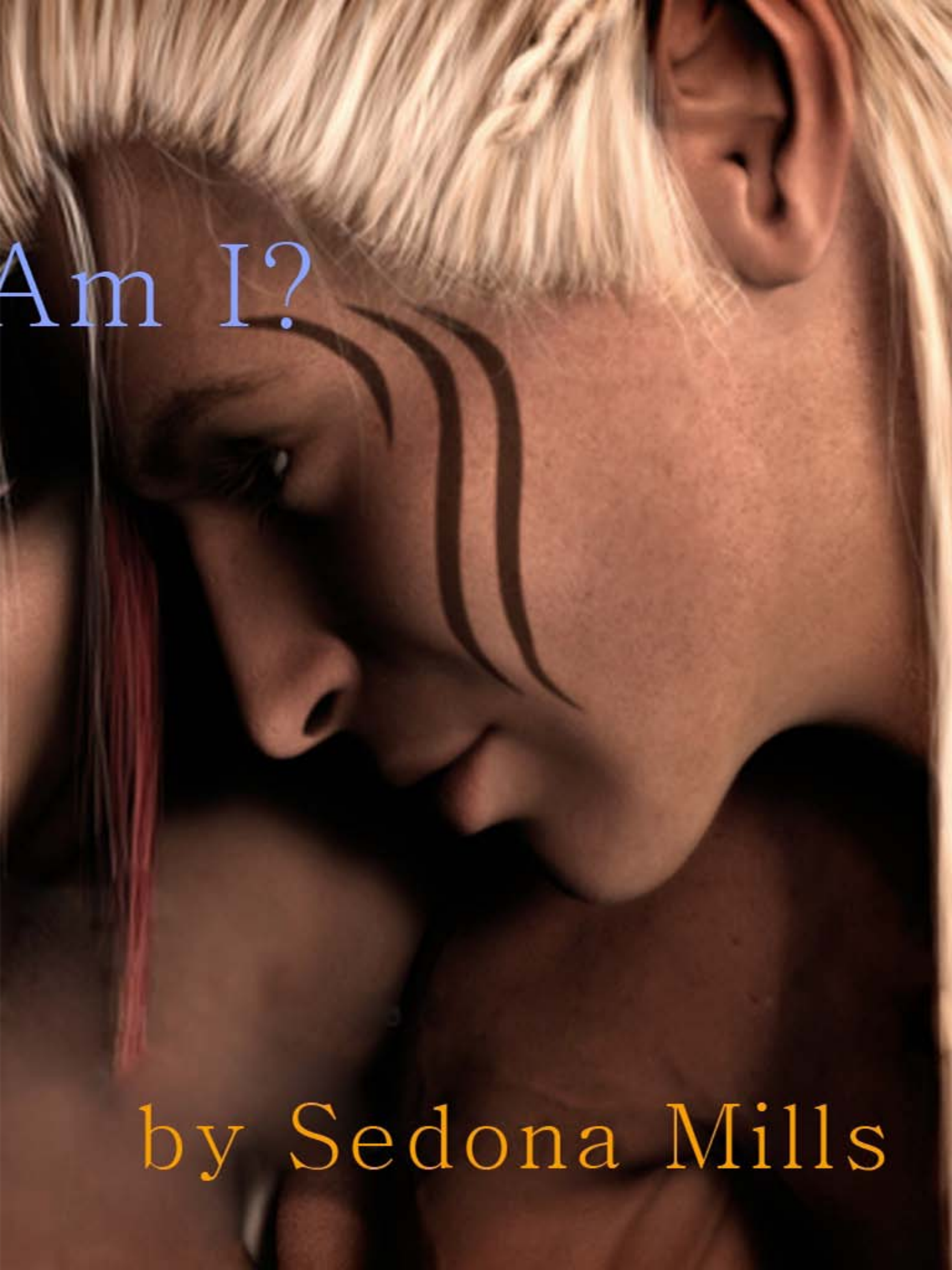
Am I?
by Sedona Mills

A few weeks ago I was surfing the net. I'm an avid *Reddit* reader, and I came across a video interview where a woman - a lesbian woman - was interviewing other women. What made the video so interesting to me was that these women being interviewed called themselves lesbian, yet they enjoyed having sex with men. Now, anyone who knows me in Second Life or, for that matter, Real Life, knows I am a woman. And I enjoy having sex with men. I have two wonderful children that I got the old fashioned way; I was drunk (okay that was a joke, but I do have two wonderful kids); however, I have also had sex and, yes, romantic relationships with other women too. So, for me it begs the question. Am I a lesbian too?

Most everyone would answer that question as 'no Sed, you're not a lesbian, you're bi-sexual' and I would tend to agree with their classification. If you look at my Second Life profile, I even state that I'm bi as part of my real life bio. I do consider myself bi-sexual in real life and I consider Sedona bi-sexual in Second Life, though she tends to have lesbian relationships. So, why are these women claiming to be lesbians when clearly they are not?! Maybe, and I don't say this often (so make sure you highlight this and frame it), maybe I am wrong? Quick, get under your desk before the universe implodes!

Okay, all kidding aside, I was interested in why these women classified themselves so differently than I, when obviously we have the same sexual interests. I want to be clear here. I really don't give much credence to labels. A person can describe themselves any way they wish. While yes, I do believe there are social norms dictating how we identify each other, for the sake of communication, how we describe ourselves and our sexual tendencies should be left to the person that knows those tendencies best. It should be left to themselves. My interest here is more cultural than personal. Why do I call myself bi-sexual, and these women call themselves lesbian? Does it have something to do with cultural norms or expectations? Pondering these deep philosophical questions got me to thinking; how does this tie into Second Life?

My immediate thought was the fact that Second Life has a huge lesbian (and gay) presence and for the most part it's totally acceptable, unlike my real life in all of its close-minded North Carolina culture. So I took a trip to some of the more famous lesbian-scene meat markets and did my own research. How many women there who sleep with men consider themselves lesbians or bi-sexual and why? To my astonishment, those women who do enjoy having sex with men in Second Life considered themselves straight in real life! Straight!!? Then why were they

hunting for women on a sim solely put there so that women could meet and hopefully have sex with another woman? Most just said they were curious or didn't have an explanation at all.

This makes my original question even more difficult to answer. Now, am I a straight woman who likes to make whoopee with women? Am I a bi-sexual woman who likes to be intimate with both sexes, or am I a lesbian woman that likes to have sex with men? Oh, the conundrum of my life! And let's not forget poor Sedona Mills, my little co-conspirator in the virtual world. How do we classify her? This obviously was going to take more deep thought; however, I wasn't really into deep thought at the time so I decided to move my experimentation another direction. How does this mish-mash of labels apply to men?

Obviously turning myself into a man in reality is probably going a bit too far for my thesis here. A sex change is totally out of the question. I just love something penetrating me way too much to give it up for this article. Sorry fans. But, we have Second Life and while I may not get to experience what it actually feels like to be a man (but boy, would that be cool just for a short time to find out), I can look at the cultural aspects of how men are viewed in their sexuality. So yes, I took the plunge for about 3500 lindens and made a very nice looking male avatar. We'll call him 'Ralph'.

I may not get to experience what it actually feels like to be a man (but boy, would that be cool just for a short time to find out)

So Ralph visited a few different venues on the grid in his exploration of his newfound life. First of all, I hit some of the typical meat markets, a.k.a gay beaches, and just about any other place on the Zindra continent, but mostly Old Lars. I was able to meet plenty of ladies there who were happy to discuss their sexuality with me. Now, I'm sure some of these 'ladies' were men in real life but this was a cultural experiment and I have to assume culture is not gender biased. So much for the sci-

method, right? So I talked with both men and women, gay and straight. I told them that while I sleep totally with women, there are men that I sometimes felt attraction to, but really never thought about having sex with. Most everyone said it was normal, and ol' Ralphie-boy was as straight as a highway in Kansas.

Now, here is where it gets interesting. I then had conversations with other women, where I stated that, while I loved having sex with women, an occasional guy now and then, if the conditions were right, like a threesome with my girlfriend and another guy, was something I enjoyed too. Most of the straight women I talked to thought Ralph was bi-sexual or gay, but not straight at all. Most of the straight men I talked to said I was gay. Pure and simple. Bi was not even an option. When I talked to lesbian women or gay men, they said Ralph was also bi-sexual or gay! Even though I was clear that Ralph's preference was women and that he could not see himself in a relationship with another man, he was not labeled, even once, as a straight man! So it's pretty clear if you're a man, once you've become involved with another penis, you are no longer straight. Period.

What really surprised me here is Ralph was being judged not by his sexual preference, but by his sexual behavior. Ralph expressed his desire for women in his life, but because he occasionally 'crossed the line,' he was no longer considered a straight man. He was gay to some degree. But what about me, and what about Sedona? How are we classified? Does being a woman, instead of a man, have the same cultural labeling criteria of sexual behavior versus sexual preference, or not? So I fired up Sedona and made the rounds again.

I started with telling people I preferred men but also enjoyed having sex with women now and then. For the most part, I was labeled as a straight women with 'bi' tendencies. But not a lesbian. Then I told others that I preferred wo-

men but also enjoyed having sex with men now and then. And for the most part I was labeled as bi-sexual. The only time I was labeled as a lesbian was if I stated I only preferred women. So again, my labeling was primarily based not on my sexual preference, such as preferring women but taking an occasional guy now and then, but was based on my sexual behavior.

What was even more compelling was the difference in how gay men and lesbian women are actually classified. Interestingly, in both cases it involved the penis. If a man has ever 'experienced the penis,' he is considered gay. For a woman to be considered a lesbian, she must be involved with no penis whatsoever. Any hint of Willy, the one-eyed Wonder Worm, finding the missus little Christmas and bam, you're bi or straight. Obviously, the gay test for men is much less stringent for men than for women. But the opposite is also true. The straight test for men is extremely specific. And for women, the opposite is true. (Confused yet?)

So where does that leave us with women that say they are lesbian but like an occasional hard one, now and then? Why do they get to label themselves as lesbian, when I'm sure most everyone, and specifically other lesbians, don't consider them as such? It was time to take the results of my experiment and put on my deep thought hat. No more procrastination for me. So taking a full glass of wine, I sat on my favorite rocking chair (Carolina rocker of course) and watched the sun set into the Great Smoky Mountains, deliberating in soft meditation.

It didn't take too long for the oracle to open and the insight to flood my mind. I myself, and just about every other person, don't label themselves based on their sexual behavior, but by their sexual orientation! That was it! It was that simple! These self-called lesbians that liked sex with men classified them-

selves not because of who they had sex with, but who they wanted relationships with! Inwardly, I thought about why I classify myself as bi-sexual; the answer is clear. I don't have a preference about whether the person I have a relationship with is a man or a woman. I've had relationships with both sexes and I felt comfortable and happy in all cases. So, my conclusion to my thesis is that we label ourselves based on our sexual preference, but those around us label us by our sexual behavior. It's not one hundred percent accurate, but the percentage is high.

So where does that leave us as a culture? For those of you that have been reading this article, and are not American, as I am, you may have been thinking I'm full of shit. Where you live it may very well be different. In the United States, we are so screwed up about how we deal with sexuality that I'm surprised the world hasn't declared us to be bat-shit crazy. Well, actually some of the world has. So I guess I should rephrase the question to where does that leave the culture in which I live? You should ask that too. To be honest, I don't really give a damn. I get to decide my sexual preferences and behavior, so I really don't care how others label me, as I stated earlier in this rant. If their criterion determining my sexuality is 'does that girl want a penis in her?' then I have to discount them. If I prefer men in a relationship, I would consider myself straight, and if I preferred to be with women, I would most likely consider myself a lesbian. But I prefer both, sexually and emotionally, and yes, because of that I consider myself a bi-sexual woman. But in this day and age of blending sexual norms, who really gives a damn?

I'm sure we have all at one time in our lives had to stop and wonder if those crazy thoughts going through our minds made us straight or gay, or something in between.

I'm sure we have all at one time in our lives had to stop and wonder if those crazy thoughts going through our minds made us straight or gay, or something in between. My first time was very clear. I was a freshman in high school and my locker was near this most gorgeous boy, a senior, quarterback of the varsity football team. And I thought about what it would be like to have him make love to me, and I felt

wonderful thinking those thoughts, until I saw his girlfriend on the cheerleading squad in her uniform (which inspired me to become a cheerleader, yeah I know, geek-cheerleader, they could make a movie out of that). And I remember she was perfectly beautiful and I wanted her so bad too. That moment in time screwed with my life for many years to come. I had to ask myself for so long: what the hell am I?

I wonder if the fuzziness of gender in Second Life does the same with others. When I'm with a woman in Second Life, I ask myself if I knew my virtual lover's puppeteer was a man would I consider what I was doing as lesbian sex? If a man got a virtual blow job by Sed or any woman in Second Life and he was truly enjoying it only to then find out that awesome oral experience was orchestrated by a man in real life, would he go through some kind of sexual identity crises as I did? Or that if two virtual women having a wonderful lesbian relationship end up with one finding out the other was a man, would there be some kind of crisis there? Do these types of situations scare you? For me they don't. But I get to cheat. I don't really care what the sex of my real life sex partner is, or what the sex of my virtual life sex partner's puppeteer actually is. Do I have a preference now and then? You bet I do. But for the rest of you who aren't even-keeled, how do you feel about that? Would you have to ask yourself the same question I did so many years ago: what the hell am I?

One thing I've learned about myself in Second Life is that, just like in Real Life, people find me attractive. What I mean by 'me' is they like Sedona's, and even Ralph's, puppeteer. They like me for who I am, regardless of my Real Life sex, or my real life physical attributes, though Ralph did have some tough times. But even so, I just let myself come out and eventually both avatars became quite popular in a crowd of any sexual orientation. I've come to learn to feel good about myself, and that wasn't always the case in my life. People around me say they feel good when they are with me and they consider me a sexy person, regardless of my real life sex or real life looks. That tells me a lot about me and a lot about the people I choose to be with in Second Life. I don't feel I should have to prove my real life sex to anyone, and I don't. Those of you who know me probably have your own opinions, and doubts. But I feel most of you don't seem to care one way or the other. Sedona is good enough for you and that makes me a wonderful bi-sexual lady, secure in her own sexuality - the one pulling Sedona's strings - a very happy woman too.

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Lou Reed

by

Lou Reed watched his wife Laurie's face rot away, revealing a grinning skull.

"Get up," said The Grim Reaper, yanking the withered musician from his bed. "I want you to meet someone."

From the shadows, a teenager in jeans and a leather jacket walked in, a guitar slung on his back.

"They tell me I had a promising future," said the teen. "But I died while waiting on the liver transplant list."

The kid strummed his guitar and sung a few lines, and Lou wept at its perfection.

Slowly, his face rotted away, revealing Death's wicked grin.

"Murderer," he said.

image by Alexandra Fomicheva

Don't Worry...
Be Thankful!

by Gudrun Gausman

What's Your Issue?

a monthly advice column by **Gudrun Gausman**

Dear Gudrun -

Should I have Thanksgiving in Real Life or Second Life this year?

Last year, I had a fight with my mother over what is the best temperature/time combination to cook the perfect turkey. I wound up getting up at 5:30 am to start it. She likes to cook a turkey for six hours at 325 degrees, and she says the slower the better, so I put mine in for 8 hours at 250 degrees, and mine was better than anything that ever came out of her oven, thank you! She's still mad.

Plus, I have a vegan to deal with … Not only do I have to be careful with his food, but people tease him 'til it hurts. Plus his dad wants him, now that he's 18, to carve the turkey. Fortunately for the poor boy, many of us are comforting types.

And there's an aunt I have to invite, whom I hate! Last year, I said something that sent her storming out of the dining room to sit in her car. That was fine with me. But I can't remember what it was I said.

But, getting back to my original question … Should I have Thanksgiving in RL or SL this year?

Thanking you in advance,

Abundance Pleasance

Dear Abby -

Ummm ... whether to have it in RL or SL depends upon whether or not you actually want to eat... also on whom you want to see at your table or, as the case may be, "table" (in the virtual sense).

Much of my time in RL is spent thinking about food: what's in the fridge, when to go to the store, what's for dinner, or is there a cool restaurant I really want to go to? (Oddly, much of my time in SL is also spent thinking about food. Like what delicious hors d'oeuvre I can consume with the cocktail I'm drinking :-/)

Eating, of course, is one of the joys of life. It's an activity that engages all of the senses at once. In SL, however, food is not so engaging. No sound, no smell, no feel, and no taste. Why even have it then? Because like all the other things in SL that aren't quite like they are in real life, it can be fun.

In RL, many questions need answers:

- Who carves the turkey?

- How do I seat people who aren't speaking?

- What would be the most appealing centerpiece for my table?

Eating, of course, is one of the joys of life.... I have to admit a passion for virtual food.

My Thanksgivings are as complicated as anyone's... though most of my family are carnivores. We have two vegetarians (thankfully not vegans). So we start out with a shrimp platter plus some cheese and veggie appetizers, then have turkey, Polish sausage (smoked and fresh), a Tofurkey, candied yams, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and green bean casserole, followed by pumpkin, mince, and apple pies, assorted candies and nuts, etc.

Oddly, the same issues arise in SL. Your answers to these questions may, in fact may determine what life you have Thanksgiving in, or whether you have it at all.

"*Thanksgiving is an emotional holiday. People travel thousands of miles to be with people they only see once a year. And then discover once a year is way too often.*"
- Johnny Carson

Anyway, how do you prepare for an SL Thanksgiving?

I have to admit a passion for virtual food. For many years, since I was a newb, one of my favorite places in SL has been the *Cas* food court at Voti (209, 21, 43), where you can purchase almost any virtual victual you could possibly desire. These foods are beautifully prepared and offer some cyber-enjoyment as well. They make great gifts and are handy to have on hand. For entertaining I keep tea and crumpets, antipasti, tapas, oysters, artisan cheeses, champagne, whiskey drinks, wine flights, lemonade, and iced tea. I also have an absinthe fountain for the truly adventurous imbiber (and you know who you are). *Cas* also offers Gorean and vampire selections and, of course, table settings.

Another fave is *HomeLife* at PondLife (77, 129, 21). Here you can purchase dining sets with fully animated food service (as opposed to just pictures of food), and a bunch of other kewl stuff, indoor and out, as well. Dining sets are the handiwork of Eladon Galsworthy, whose products I have always owned and greatly admire. To me, Eladon is certainly the pioneer of SL eating… For years ALL the better SL restaurants used his dining sets more or less exclusively. (There are some lovely picnic blankets made by others at the store, but their attraction is not the food they have pictured, but the cuddles they include. :))

Not quite as overwhelming as *Cas* is *Kitchen Korner* (128, 128, 60), which does food, liquor, furniture, and dining anims with a somewhat different approach. There are gender specific approaches to eating and drinking both fingerfoods and dining table items. You may or may not prefer them. The table dining offers variety and choice in how you eat. You can also get groceries, pots and pans, etc., in addition to prepared dishes. Also featured are a variety of buffet style food and drink dispensers.

Utensils in SL are interesting. They're there if you want to use them, and of course, they contribute to a genteel dining experience. All of those I've seen operate in a European fashion: no one switches their fork to the right hand after cutting. This makes very good sense given the complexity of a hand switch in an animation.

And some of you may prefer one stop shopping - getting an entire Thanksgiving spread at a very reasonable price… You can do so by visiting Angel Damask in SL Marketplace, or at her store in Winddragon (82, 74, 22 – Go here and find the shops on the Teleport map; explore Winddragon while you're at it). Angel can make you ready for ANY holiday!

But there are many who feel that all the fun of Thanksgiving lies in the cooking, often a convivial communal effort starting early in the morning, involving siblings, parents, aunts and other available help, and consummating in the great feast, followed by a jolly clean-up party. For those wishing to accomplish this is SL, there is some amazing stuff out there. For example, the *La Antigua* kitchen, made by heart homes for the *Aphrodite Shop*.

This kitchen contains over 25 menus you can make; 55 single animations, 18 scenes, and 9 couple animations; over 105 items that dispense wearable props; working lamps, water, appliances, and cabinets; and all the necessary items - dishes, shelves, plants, cookbooks, pots, pans, jars, fruits, meats, vegetables, etc. To get the the full impact of this remarkable creation, you MUST watch this video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shV-J4RmpnE&feature=youtu.be

You can get it on Marketplace.

ANYWAY, whether you have Thanksgiving in RL or SL, you should probably make some Fig Toasties (adapted from Leah Eskin's "Home on the Range" in the Chicago Tribune).

4 slices crusty (artisan) bread
2 oz triple cream soft-ripened cheese
4 fresh ripe figs (these would be purple on the outside, pink inside)
2 tbsp unsalted butter
1 tsp balsamic vinegar
1 pinch crushed red pepper

Toast the bread golden brown

Spread cheese on the slices of bread and cut each into 3 pieces

Cut off the bottom of each fig, and slice each into 3 circles

Heat your butter in a skillet and sauté the fig slices 'til the pink turns tan (about 1 min per side), drizzle on the vinegar, sprinkle on the pepper, and saute until deeply colored (1 min more per side)

Place figs on cheese toast, and eat.

*These instructions will, of course, vary depending upon the size of the bread and the size of the figs.

These yummedies can be served as appetizers at a RL feast, or you can have them with your favorite cocktail at your SL event.

So, beware of gluttony, defined as: "prae-propere, laute, nimis, ardenter, studiose."

AND, above all, don't talk to your food!

"Some of my best conversations were with a lettuce. I couldn't go on though, because people were starting to look at me funny. So I turned over a new leaf and ate it."

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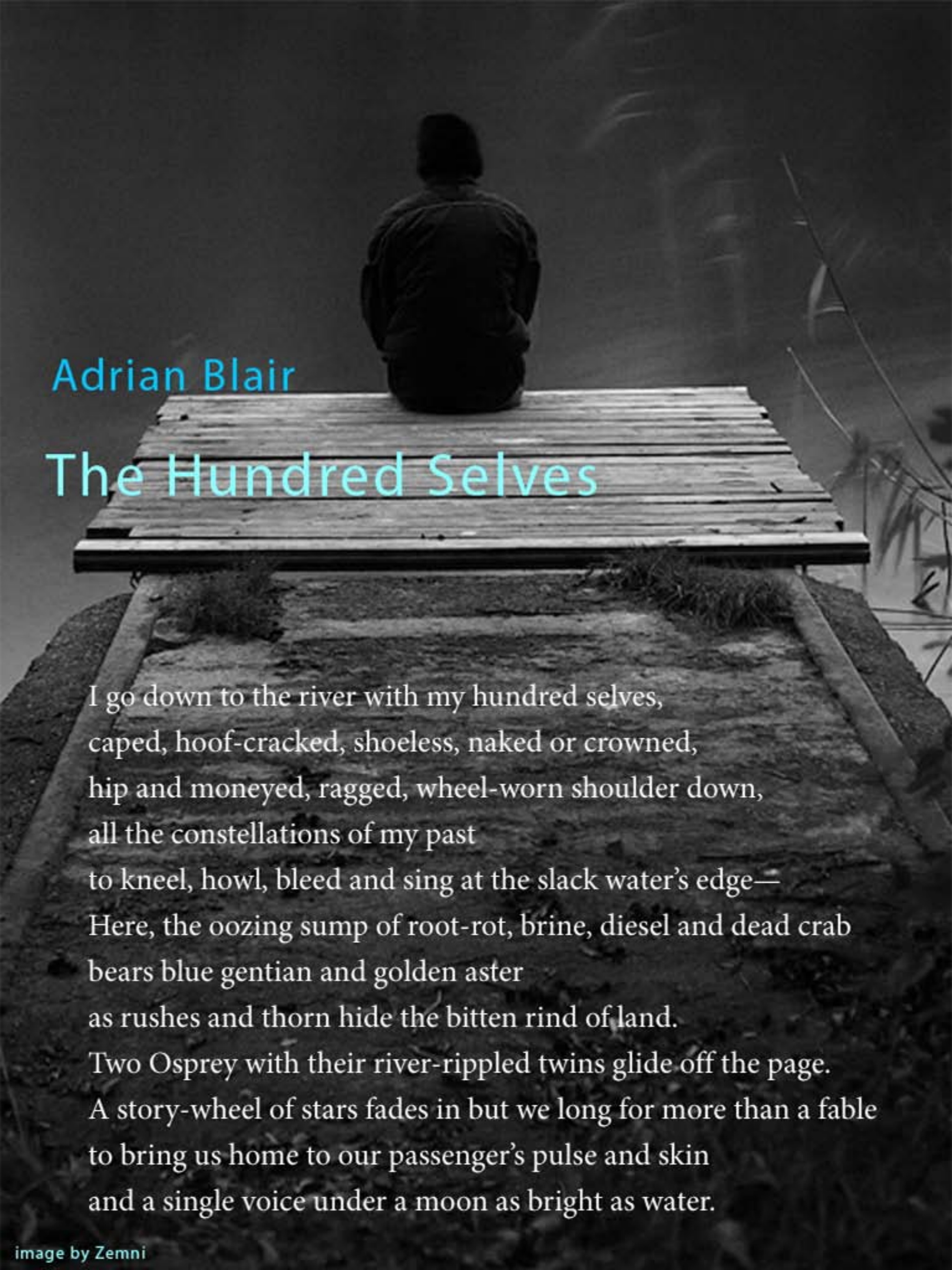

Adrian Blair

The Hundred Selves

I go down to the river with my hundred selves,
caped, hoof-cracked, shoeless, naked or crowned,
hip and moneyed, ragged, wheel-worn shoulder down,
all the constellations of my past
to kneel, howl, bleed and sing at the slack water's edge—
Here, the oozing sump of root-rot, brine, diesel and dead crab
bears blue gentian and golden aster
as rushes and thorn hide the bitten rind of land.
Two Osprey with their river-rippled twins glide off the page.
A story-wheel of stars fades in but we long for more than a fable
to bring us home to our passenger's pulse and skin
and a single voice under a moon as bright as water.

image by Zemni

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by StarGazer
Daylight

Stop for a second and think. Really think. Who do you know has had breast cancer? A friend, a family member, perhaps yourself. Now stop and ponder this. One in seven women, as well as some men by the way, will get breast cancer in their lifetime. That's a lot of fear, a lot of disfigurement, rejection, poor image, suffering through chemo or surgery, illness and/or death. That's a lot of people, you know.

And what causes this? Pesticides, pollution, genes, radiation, smoking, who knows all the causes. But it is a big, a very big, problem. And you, we all, need to do something about it.
Soon, if not now.

So what are people doing? Well, all over the world people are always walking and fundraising and doing the right thing to raise the level of awareness for this scourge; to prevent, diagnose early, understand and treat it.

In Second Life, several people are doing things to help. In this article, I want to just describe one that I watched from up close, even volunteering to help a little because it just seemed right when it was needed. I am talking about Models Giving Back and their first annual fundraiser for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The event, titled Rock Your Rack, gave people a chance to be involved, to participate and to enjoy the cause with live music, fashion shows, dancers and silent auctions. It also featured 34 designers who donated some or all of their income from specially designed apparel to help the cause, in this case The National Breast Cancer Foundation.

NBCF's mission is to save lives through early detection and to provide mammograms for those in need. This mission includes increasing awareness through education, providing diagnostic breast care services for those in need, and providing nurturing support services. Feel free to visit their website: www.nationalbreastcancer.org

Rock Your Rack is a big deal with over 9000 website hits during the six day event from September 26th to October 1st, 2013 this year. The number of avatars at the shows and auction was large as well. And, as is unique to Second Life, it was felt around the world with a huge contingent from the US and another large influx of visitors from Europe. People who didn't know

each other were suddenly acting in unison, helping a project that helps people they know and love.

Let me highlight that point again. Breast cancer touches lives around the world and an event like this really works well in a virtual world.

One of the big highlights of the week-long event was the Saturday, September 26th fashion show. I don't mean just a fashion show but, rather, five consecutive shows in one day, from 9 AM until 8 PM. It was a marathon that took all the energy everyone involved had. There were 17 female models and five male models who strutted the catwalk while the hostesses read style points. There was also background music or intermission performances by six different musical acts (who, by the way, also donated money, not just time), and five DJs.

I think it is worth noting just how lovely some of the newly created designs were. That, and watching the show up close, showed how classy and savvy this event was, a cause for those in need, an end to the concept of living for only one's self.

It was a huge undertaking and huge credit goes to MGB CEO Jamee Sandalwood and Designer Coordinator and Manager (also COO) Suki Barrowstone. I witnessed them working themselves into the ground but must also give credit to the help of so many in

MGB who helped. Jamee and Suki also wanted to thank so many, including Phoenix Firestorm, who featured a link to the event on the sign in page. They also wished to thank Dallas Modeling Company, advisors such as Locked Semaphore, the models and performers, the visitors and a slew of others too long to fit in this article.

I think a few highlights of various people provide some additional insight. One of the designers herself is fighting this dreaded disease. Watching everyone pitch in and seeing the event coalesce into a work of SL wonder was worth the value of covering the event.

Jamee Binder (nee Sandalwood) noted that being involved was rewarding for her in particular, especially watching everyone coming together to support this great cause, more than they could have imagined this year. Suki noted it made her fill with pride at the great work of so many, whether it was security or script writers, volunteers or contributors.

So how did they do? Well, for the number crunchers in some of us, they raised 214,310 Linden, about 800 dollars US, for this great cause. Pretty impressive wouldn't you say?!

Next year, the RYR event will be more spread out in terms of the fashion show and the entertainment. Again, it will be in the fall and I urge you to do the right thing, and have fun doing so, by showing up and contributing.

For more information suggest you check their website:
http://rockyourrack.wordpress.com

You may still be able to donate at:
http://www.stayclassy.org/fundraise?fcid=241580

Rock Your Rack!

There is no turning back!

Stargazer Daylight

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